



HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

An electronic newsletter in support of public safety services in Montana

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IM Weekly Highlights

- DHS approved NEPAs for the last three sites that are part of IJ-2 of the PSIC grant.
- PSIC site construction SOW's on fast track review.
- Cominco microwave equipment installed and operational – Trunking is in test mode.
- IM Executive Director Bruski briefed MT Assoc. of Chiefs of Police leadership as well as members of the SIEC.

PSSB Weekly Highlights

- 9-1-1 Program attended South Central PSAP meeting.
- PSSB is exploring broadband impact to state and IM.
- PSSB supported the first meeting of the newly convened SIEC.

Policy Forum Announced

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The National Association of Counties, in cooperation with the National League of Cities, has just announced its next Interoperable Communications Policy Forum, which will be held Sept. 24-25 in Phoenix, AZ. County and city officials—both in elected and management positions—are invited to apply as a team. Officials from agencies or departments such as these may comprise the team: elected leaders; fire, law enforcement, emergency management, health, homeland security, information technology, and telecommunications. (Note: At least one person on the team must be an elected official who serves in a governing capacity, such as a county commissioner or city council member.) Teams of three local officials, plus an optional state official, are encouraged to app

This two-day event will help county and municipal officials address important questions and learn how to advocate for and implement actions related to governance, procedures, technology, training & exercises, and usage of voice and data equipment in a seamless manner in real-time. The Forum is not a technical training seminar; rather, it focuses on policy-level issues and concerns.

Travel assistance of up to \$500, two nights' lodging per participant, and full breakfast and lunch during the Forum is provided. No other costs are covered. For more information and the application form, visit the NACO website at <http://www.naco.org/interop>. Please submit one application per team.

Tri-County Emphasizes Radio Inventories

By Dan Sullivan dsullivan@mt.gov

Members of the Tri-County Consortium met on June 24 in Helena, and were informed of the importance for all agencies to complete radio inventory fleet mapping documents by Aug. 11 to support the IM's initiative to upgrade Motorola firmware and determine how many

radios need to be enabled with trunking. A fleet mapping session is scheduled for Great Falls on August 4 and 5. Bill Fleiner emphasized that "hands-on" technicians should be encouraged to attend this of other upcoming training sessions. Bill asked Broadwater and Jefferson Counties to inventory their radios in accordance with the instructions posted on the Interoperability Montana website and forward the inventory to him by the deadline. Garrett Fawaz, DOC, explained various features and differences in radio brands and models.

Tom Smith, IM Project Manager gave a report on the status of projects within the consortium. Bull Mountain, just south of Boulder, is under construction with the shelter, electrical service and generator expected to be in place by early July. A Form 299 is being submitted to BLM to add a shelter to the Boulder Hill site, which the Dept. of Transportation is providing. Sheriff Craig Doolittle, Jefferson County, emphasized the importance of establishing connectivity from Boulder Hill to the IM System. The Statement of Work for the Limestone site, which is located in Broadwater County, is being fine tuned.

Materials for reinforcing the STARC Armory tower in Helena are being shipped. Also, the NEPA has been approved for XL Heights. The buy-sell has been signed for the site, and Wing Spooner is getting quotes for a site survey.

Garrett Fawaz, Department of Corrections (DOC), reported that the Montana State Prison has completely transitioned to an all-digital radio system. In addition, portable and mobile units are being installed throughout the Probation and Parole Bureau and Youth Services Division statewide offices. DOC should be completely transitioned to its new enterprise radio system by the end of July.

The group decided to keep meeting monthly due to increased activity during this construction season. Its next meeting is Wed., July 29 at 10:00 am at the DOC Annex Bldg.,

Funding Sources Updated at Finance Committee

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

At the July 13 IM Finance Committee meeting, members received an update on the status of various funding sources. For example, FY05 Dept. of Homeland Security (DHS) grant funds are almost expended, with just a few open invoices, while the FY06 DHS grant is now closed out. The DHS FY07 grant terminates in September, so an extension request will be made for the small remaining balance. Participants also reviewed the monthly Cash Expenditure Report.

IM members are asked to use the new IM Travel Reimbursement Form, which is located at this link: http://interop.mt.gov/content/docs/IM_Travel_Reimbursement

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[Form 2009_01_06.doc](#). Also, IM folks are encouraged to submit reimbursement requests in a timely manner. Amy Mays, DES, clarified DHS regulations on travel expenses and office supplies, and indicated that a DHS Montana site visit is scheduled the first week of August. DES is also in the process of hiring grant manager and quality assurance positions. Once hired, they will be working on equipment inventory lists, among other tasks.

Scott Bradford, PSSB, reported that a site monitoring visit on the COPS Grant is scheduled for mid-August 18, and he is working with Anderson ZurMuehlen to ensure that all invoices are in order. He is also examining IM needs, including subscriber units.

Mark Canton, Motorola, said that work on the Second Master Controller will proceed in two phases. Phase 1 will be an upgrade to the existing master zone controller. The State ITPR has been completed and submitted to process the first invoice. As part of this procedure, the overall construction plan and timeline need to be outlined.

Members also discussed allocating budgeted training dollars to the Northern Tier and the Vigilant Guard exercise. Training modules will have to be approved by Homeland Security.

Contracts have been signed and award letters issued for infrastructure work on the PSIC-funded Antelope Peak, Ellis, KONA, and Sierra sites. Furthermore, Kerry O'Connell, Sweet Grass County, reported that the RFP for the Greycliff site is expected to be released this week. Bill Fleiner indicated that this construction season is expected to be one of the best ever, with work progressing on some 16 sites.

The next IM Finance Committee meeting will be Mon., August 10, from 9:00 to noon at the offices of Anderson ZurMuehlen, 825 Great Northern Blvd. in Helena.

Northern Tier Reports Great Progress on Fleet Mapping

By Dan Sullivan dsullivan@mt.gov

At the July 9 Northern Tier meeting, great progress was reported on the fleet mapping effort, particularly in Flathead and Lincoln Counties, where Jack Spillman, Flathead County Radio System Administrator, has been assisting as well as Hill and Blaine Counties, where Sheriff Don Brostrom, Hill County, has been coordinating the effort. In addition, Roger Hays, Lewis and Clark County, and Dale Osborne, Montana Highway Patrol, have been assisting. Roger Smith, IM Radio system Administrator, thanked everyone for their hard work and dedication. Members were reminded of upcoming fleet mapping and SOP training opportunities.

Roger Smith gave an extensive report on microwave testing and system monitoring. While huge progress has been made in resolving bit error rates on most of the system, a few trouble spots still remain. A new

microwave dish is now installed at Cominco and one is being installed at Pat's Knob. Furthermore, the new MUX at Windy Hill is being installed along with alarm cable hook ups. Motorola is still in the process of conducting acceptance testing.

Members discussed Centennial Peak and optional sites, the need for repeaters, and the use of various brands of radios on the IM system. Concern was expressed about the Montana Highway Patrol's ability to honor its commitment to maintain the microwave system along the Northern Tier given legislative budget cuts.

Roger noted that DHS will be auditing 2005 funds expended on the Northern Tier. He asked that each county review its equipment inventories to verify that DES award letters match the actual equipment installed at each site.

The next NTIP meeting was set for Thurs., Aug. 6 from 9:00 to noon at the Great Northern Inn, 1345 1st St. in Havre.

Upcoming Meetings

July 22

Eastern Tier (ETIC)
Glendive • 10:00 am
Dawson County Courthouse Community Room
207 W. Bell

July 23

Big Sky 11 Consortium
Billings • 10:00 am - noon
Billings Police Dept. Training Center, 4810 Midland Road

July 24

Mobile Data Terminal Consortium
Bozeman • 10:00 am - noon
Best Western City Center Motel, 507 W Main St.

July 27

IM Technical Committee
Billings • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
BLM Offices, 5001 Southgate Drive

July 28

SOP Technical Assistance Training
Helena • 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
MACo Large Conference Rm., Lower Level
2715 Skyway Drive

July 29

SOP Technical Assistance Training
Billings • 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
BLM Offices, 5001 Southgate Drive

July 29

Tri-County Consortium
Helena • 10:00 am
Dept. of Corrections Annex Building
Behind 515 N. Sanders St.

Aug. 4-5

Fleet Mapping Training
Great Falls • 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Great Falls Police Dept., 112 1st Street South
To register, contact Dorothy Gremaux at 406-535-1800
or e-mail her at dgremaux@ci.lewistown.mt.us